



When climate science became climate politics: British media representations of climate change in 1988

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Abstract:

Climate change has become a pressing environmental concern for scientists, social commentators and politicians. Previous social science research has explored media representations of climate change in various temporal and geographical contexts. Through the lens of Social Representations Theory, this article provides a detailed qualitative thematic analysis of media representations of climate change in the 1988 British broadsheet press, given that this year constitutes an important juncture in this transition of climate change from the domain of science to that of the socio-political sphere. The following themes are outlined: (i) "Climate change: a multi-faceted threat"; (ii) "Collectivisation of threat"; (iii) "Climate change and the attribution of blame"; and (iv) "Speculative solutions to a complex socio-environmental problem." The article provides detailed empirical insights into the "starting-point" for present-day disputes concerning climate change and lays the theoretical foundations for tracking the continuities and discontinuities characterising social representations of climate change in the future.

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Resource Description

Communication: ☒

resource focus on research or methods on how to communicate or frame issues on climate change; surveys of attitudes, knowledge, beliefs about climate change

A focus of content

Communication Audience: ☒

audience to whom the resource is directed

Public

Exposure : ☒

weather or climate related pathway by which climate change affects health

Unspecified Exposure

Geographic Feature: ☒

resource focuses on specific type of geography

Climate Change and Human Health Literature Portal

None or Unspecified

Geographic Location:

resource focuses on specific location

Non-United States

Non-United States: Europe

European Region/Country: European Country

Other European Country : Britain

Health Impact:

specification of health effect or disease related to climate change exposure

General Health Impact

Mitigation/Adaptation:

mitigation or adaptation strategy is a focus of resource

Adaptation

Resource Type:

format or standard characteristic of resource

Research Article

Timescale:

time period studied

Time Scale Unspecified